released by India and Pakistan from their respective jails since 1.1.2003 till date;

(b) the basis on which they were released;

(c) names addresses and other details of each person released;

(d) the number of years they were in Pakistani jails and the charges imposed on these persons; and

(e) the number and details of prisoners and fishermen who at present lodged in Pakistani jails?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (d) Since 1 January 2003, India has released 34 Pakistani civilians and 93 fishermen. During the same period, Pakistan has released 38 Indian civilians, 2 missing Indian defence personnel, and 623 Indian fishermen. They had been detained on different charges, including overstay and illegal entry. The procedure for the release of the prisoners involves the grant of consular access to the detainees. Their nationality is confirmed by their respective Government on the basis of information collected during the consular access. After confirmation of nationality and completion of the jail terms, the detainees are released and repatriated.

(e) As per available information, 938 Indian civilians, 412 fishermen and 54 POWs are presently believed to be in Pakistan's custody.

Extradition of Quattrocchi

1700 SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Federal Court of Malaysia dismissed the latest appeal to secure the extradition of Quattrocchi;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the Swedish Principal Investigation Officer of Bofors gave a statement that Quattrocchi should be interrogated in the Bofors pay off case; and

(d) if so, what Government of India is planning to do in the light of the dismissal of appeal and principal investigating officer's opinion?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED) : (a) and (b) Yes. The Session's Judge, Kuala Lumpur, had in his order dated December 2, 2002, discharged Ottavio Quattrocchi of the extradition proceedings against him on technical grounds. This order was upheld by the Court of Appeal, Kuala Lumpur on April 30, 2003 as also by the Federal Court of Malaysia on March 31, 2004.

(c) There is no report of an official statement having been made by any Swedish investigation officer of Bofors.

(d) A Red Corner Notice issued against Ottavio Quattrocchi is in force.

Most Favoured Nation Status to India by Pakistan

1701. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Pakistan has indicated that very shortly it is going to confer the 'most favoured nation' status to India;

(b) if so, the details of the move; and

(c) in what way it would help India and Pakistan bilaterally to cement bilateral relations and also to increase the trade between the two countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Although India continues to extend Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status, Pakistan has not reciprocated the gesture despite its obligations under the WTO. Government are of the view that grant of MFN status to India by Pakistan would not only contribute to normalization and promotion of trade and economic relations between the two countries, but also help create environment conducive to addressing more difficult issues.